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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8489

INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE

RUCNMGH/MAGHREB COLLECTIVE

RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE

RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0689

RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1038

RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 2231

RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0704

RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE 0259

RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 0622

RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 0097

RHMFISS/COMSOCOEUR VAIHINGEN GE

RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE

RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS

RUEHDS/USMISSION USAU ADDIS ABABA

RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 0698

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1147

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NOUAKCHOTT 000374

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/04/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [KPAO](#) [MR](#)

SUBJECT: MAURITANIA: POLITICAL ROUNDUP FOR THE WEEK OF MAY 31-JUNE 4

REF: A. NOUAKCHOTT 368

[¶](#)B. NOUAKCHOTT 370

[¶](#)C. NOUAKCHOTT 369

Classified By: Ambassador Mark M. Boulware for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[¶](#)1. (C) Summary: Once again, the Senegalese mediation dominated the political scene in Mauritania for the week of May 31 to June 4. To the surprise of many, a tentative agreement was reached in Dakar June 2. President Wade and the parties to the crisis are scheduled to officially sign the agreement in Nouakchott on June 4. Mauritanians across the board are relieved with the outcome despite the remaining challenges. Additionally, Prime Minister Waghef and other political prisoners may be released soon. In other news, Libyans supposedly delivered arms to the High State Council (HSC) and Al Qaeda has a new Mauritanian emir. President Obama's speech to the Muslim nation resonated positively with Mauritarians and electoral lists have finally been published.
End summary.

[¶](#)2. (SBU) Trip to Nouadhibou: EmbOffs traveled May 31 to June 1 to the economic capital Nouadhibou to meet political actors and assess the mood ahead of elections (Refs A and B, Septel).

[¶](#)3. (C) Agreement reached: A tentative agreement was reached in Dakar on June 2 (Ref C), and initialed by the three main actors (General Aziz, Ahmed Ould Daddah, and FNDD president Jemil Ould Mansour). The official signing, originally scheduled to be held on June 3 in Nouakchott, was rescheduled for June 4. The press reported the delay was due to Senegalese President Wade's "busy calendar" but Ambassador Boulware learned there were issues pending in the negotiation such as the release of political prisoners. Local media outlets reported in the afternoon of June 4 that Prime Minister Waghef and other political prisoners could be released later in the day.

[¶](#)4. (U) Maouloud calls for turning the page: In an FNDD press conference held in Nouakchott on June 3, FNDD co-leader and UFP president Mohamed Ould Maouloud thanked President Abdallahi, Ahmed Ould Daddah, and others. Notably, he also thanked all parties, including General Aziz, for the concessions that were made to arrive at an agreement, and

called for "turning the page" on the past.

¶15. (SBU) Supporters say Vall will run: Several media outlets reported that Colonel (and former president) Ely Ould Mohamed Vall will run in the upcoming presidential elections.

Supposedly he made the statement to some of his supporters at his house June 2. Comment: Many Mauritians and independent observers regard Vall as the only person in Mauritania who could mount a serious challenge to Aziz in an election. Nevertheless, Vall is technically still in the military, as his request to retire was denied by General Aziz a few months ago. He is therefore ineligible to run according to the Mauritanian constitution. End comment.

¶16. (C) Ambassador meets with Lemrabott Mohamed Moctar: Moctar, sales representative for "Rose" milk, a German company in Mauritania, said in a meeting with Ambassador on June 3 that the resolution of the political crisis in Mauritania taught Mauritians that "one can demand that the law is applied and succeed." Moctar called for more U.S. involvement in Mauritania to isolate the military from power and close the vicious cycle of coups d'etat.

¶17. (C) Ambassador meets with Lemrabott Abdennahi: Abdennahi, former counselor to Abdallah's Prime Minister, met with Ambassador June 3 and expressed his satisfaction with the Dakar agreement. He called for a larger U.S. role in Mauritania and highlighted the challenges ahead, including the role of the High State Council and military involvement in politics.

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¶18. (U) Libyans deliver arms to Mauritania: According to local press reports, a Libyan airplane landed in Nouakchott International Airport on May 31. The Mauritanian security forces prohibited all access to the area, which has sparked all sorts of speculations as to the contents of the airplane. The press has speculated about an arms delivery to the junta.

¶19. (U) Al Qaeda recruits a new Mauritanian emir: Algerian press reported that Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb recruited Mauritanian citizen Abderrahmane Ebi Ansi Al Chinguitty as a new leader. In remarks published on the internet, Al Chinguitty threatened American and European interests in Mauritania as well as former President Ould Taya, Ely Ould Mohamed Vall and General Aziz, who he accused of working for "the crusaders." Al Chinguitty also announced his opposition to the democratization process in Mauritania.

¶10. (U) Electoral list finally available: The Ministry of the Interior finally published the long-awaited electoral list for the now postponed June 6 election. According to the list there are 1,183,455 voters and 2,485 voting polls in Mauritania. 20,465 voters registered to vote outside the country in 63 voting polls located in 19 countries. Note: The online link trumpeted by state-run media still does not work. End note.

¶11. (SBU) Mauritians approve of President Obama's speech: Embassy Nouakchott hosted a live screening of President Obama's June 4 speech to the Muslim world in Cairo. Imams, politicians, journalists and civil society were present and largely approved of the President's address (Septel).

¶12. (U) General Aziz suspends his campaign: On June 3, General Aziz announced the suspension of all campaigning activities. In Nouakchott, Aziz supporters took down tents and electoral paraphernalia.

BOULWARE